

Remarks

Claims 1 to 16 were pending. By this Amendment, claims 1, 5, and 9 to 16 have been cancelled without prejudice and claims 2 to 4 have been amended to independent form without changing their scope. No new matter is presented by the amendments and entry is respectfully requested. Accordingly, claims 2 to 4 and 6 to 8, as amended, are now pending.

As a first matter, applicants in the previous Amendment on page 1, incorrectly stated "In accordance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.121(c), please amend claim 28 by rewriting it in clean form as follows (the marked up version of the amended claims follows the Remarks)." Of course, "claim 28" is a typographical error for "claims 1 to 4" which is clear from the rest of the Amendment, where claims 1 to 4 were amended and so acknowledged in the Remarks. Any confusion is regretted.

The Examiner objected to claims 2 to 4 and 6 to 8 as being dependent on a rejected base claim but stated that such claims would be allowable if written in independent form.

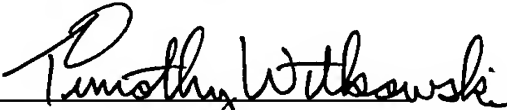
In response, applicants have amended claims 2 to 4 to make claims 2 to 4 and 6 to 8 independent of any rejected claim. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection is respectfully requested.

Since all of the other rejections apply to claims that have been cancelled herein, such rejections are moot. Accordingly, applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw these rejections.

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Amendment dated December 5, 2003
Reply to Office Action dated September 24, 2003

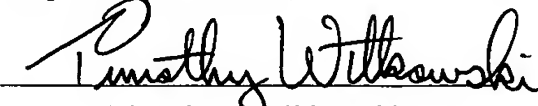
Applicants submit that all the pending claims are allowable and respectfully solicit a Notice of Allowance for all of the pending claims. If the Examiner feels that a telephone interview would be helpful in advancing prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to contact the attorney below.

Certificate of Mailing Under 37 C.F.R. § 1.8(a)
I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on December 5, 2003.


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Dated

Respectfully submitted,


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